

THE ROLE OF POLITICAL PARTIES IN EGYPT'S POLITICAL TRANSITION: A MIRAGE

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ABSTRACT

Political parties are indispensable for political transformation. Fluidity, uncertainty and unpredictability which accompany the transformation process make it extremely difficult for the process to succeed. That's why political parties, as a political tool, are considered an essential political popular channel to facilitate and accelerate the process. However, in post revolution Egypt, this wasn't the case. This research argues that although Egyptian political Parties, here and after called "EPP" found the appropriate political atmosphere after the 25th of January revolution, they didn't assume their expected roles in the democratic transformation process. It discusses the main causes behind the political inefficiency of the EPP using a mixture of quantitative and qualitative methodological approaches to explain. Moreover, it presents some of the suggested recommendations for the EPP to enhance their efficiency and hence participate in accelerate the transformation process.

KEYWORDS: Political Transformation, Political Parties, Political Systems, Political Efficiency, Political Activists, Political Performance & Political Effectiveness

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INTRODUCTION

The tremendous political pandemonium within the Arab Spring countries since the start of 2011 has initiated high levels of interests in the mechanism of political transformation from authoritarian regimes to democracy. Egypt as a state in transition witnessed a fluid, uncertain and unpredictable political atmosphere. In other words, the fall of thirty years lasting regime resulted in a sort of societal turmoil. It posed a lot of political questions about Egypt's future, for example, what is Egypt transitioning to? Is it a political transition from an authoritarian to a democratic rule? What kind of political regime is appropriate for the transitioning state, presidential, semi-presidential or parliamentary? What kind of government is required, a technocratic or democratic? Who chooses the cabinet, the president or the parliament? Are political parties allowed to perform their assumed role or in other words, is the coming society a pluralist oriented society? Are the Egyptian people really ripe for democracy? All of these questions and other relevant and similar questions were posed in post revolution Egypt.

Post revolution Egypt witnessed three phases, the first phase started with the overthrow of Mubarak regime and the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) became the defacto executive, the second phase started with the election of Mohamed Morsi and the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) assumed authority and the third phase started with the 30 of June revolution, the toppling of Mohamed Morsi and the election of the new president Abdel-Fattah El-Sisi. Each of these phases has its own characteristics. In the first phase under the SCAF, political

and economic conditions were highly serious. The security grip of the state was at stake. Moreover, when the military took over the state after the fall of Mubarak regime, many questions were raised about its future role, particularly the extent of control it will have over the state. Due to these questions a lot of demonstrations spread all over the country. Demonstrators feared that the rule of the SCAF would revive and regenerate another military authoritarian rule. Although a lot of demonstrations took place, one can say that the seeds of democracy started to grow up and efforts to build a full-fledged democracy were ongoing. There has been an atmosphere of diversity, participation of political parties and movements in the democratic dialogue, an upsurge in independent media, including new television stations and newspapers and citizens had greater leeway to voice their opinions online. Generally free and fair parliamentary elections, which included the long-banned MB and other religious parties such as the Salafist party, Al-Nour, were held between November 2011 and January 2012 with broad participation.¹ The elections represented an evidence of a significant political progress since Mubarak's ouster, but not a meaningful structural, political and institutional reform.

Under the second phase, the MB's phase, worsened political conditions prevail. Although Mohamed Morsi, a candidate from the previously outlawed MB, who won the presidential runoff vote, promised to establish a democratic atmosphere and trigger the democratic transition of Egypt steps forward, he has been constantly gaining more opponents to his rule from the beginning. The new elected president, who lacked the political expertise and subjugated to the strong Guidance Bureau and the MB, took steady actions to monopolize power and start the "Ikhwanization" Process by appointing either a candidate of the MB, Ikhwan, or Ikhwan related individuals to all the high-rank positions, they nullified the constitutional declaration made by the SCAF and drafted a new constitution by an undemocratically selected committee with vivid deficiencies concerning freedom and civil rights and endeavored to dominate the press by appointing about fifty loyal editors-in-chief and board members of national newspapers.² These undemocratic actions and decisions made by the MB's president and his group signaled a continuous process for establishing and consolidating a new authoritarian and autocratic rule than establishing a sustainable democracy. Moreover, this led to the emergence of rebel movements to overthrow the biased new president. Revolutionists who dreamt of freedom and social justice were let down. The MB which claimed to be the rescue removed the mask and turned to be the hang rope for democracy. Consequently on the 30th of June 2013, demonstrations and uprisings prevailed in all governorates; about thirty three millions Egyptians fled to streets declaring their protest and their call to topple the MB president who was removed from office on the 3rd of July 2013.

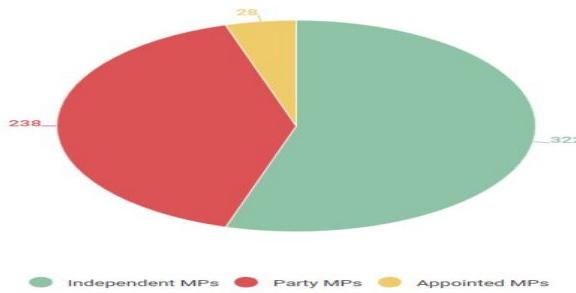
With the ouster of the MB president, a new phase started. A new Road Map was launched and a new president, Abdel-Fattah El-Sisi, was elected. This phase witnessed new steps forward towards democratization. The Road Map included amendments to the constitution concerning civil rights, freedom and holding the parliamentary elections and inclusion of the youth in the decision making process. Moreover, consolidating free establishment of political parties and increasing their scope of participation in the transition process was highly considered. For example, article (74) of Egypt's constitution (2014) stated that Citizens have the right to form political parties by notification as regulated by the law and parties may only dissolved by a judicial ruling. Al-Ahram Centre for Political and Strategic Studies (ACPSS) figures

¹ Preliminary Report on All Three Phases of the People's Assembly Elections," (January 24, 2012): The Carter Center Election Witnessing Mission: Egypt <http://www.cartercenter.org>.

² Khalifa, Sally, (2012), Egypt's Transition: How Is It Under Brotherhood Rule?, ISTITUTO PER GLI STUDI DI POLITICA INTERNAZIONALE, PP.1-2

indicated that the number of legally licensed political parties reached 83 in 2015.³ Moreover, in the parliamentary elections in 2015, 44 political parties contested in the first stage of Egypt's parliamentary elections in 2015 and 21 parties made it to this parliament. Parliamentary election results indicate that 322 of the 596 new House of Representative members are independents unaffiliated with any political party, a significant shift from Egypt's historical trend of empowering majority parties to govern Parliament. Two hundred thirty-eight (238 about 40%) candidates affiliated with political parties were elected, with the Free Egyptians Party taking the highest number of seats at 65, Nation's Future, a political party aimed at giving a voice to young Egyptians and founded by a 25-year old who is the youngest head of party in Egypt, came in second with 51 seats.⁴

Figure 1: Egyptian Parliament 2015: Independent Candidates Vs. Parties



Source: <http://egyptianchronicles.blogspot.com.eg/2015/12/egyelections-final-results-of.html>

Therefore, in the third phase, political parties witnessed unprecedented scope of freedom and allowed participation. Political parties enjoy various political rights, for example, constitutional right of establishment without any required conditions except what might threaten democracy, no supervising committee to approve or disapprove the establishment of new parties, no authority can dissolve any political party except by a judicial ruling, freedom of association and assembling, freedom of expression and freedom to contest in elections, parliamentary or presidential, freedom to criticize and oppose the executive and legislative authorities and freedom to establish coalitions with other parties and fronts, etc. Even though, EPP have this massive scope of freedom, their role in the democratic transition of Egypt was disappointing. Egyptians were let down by the marionette or cardboard political parties which were assumed to perform an active role in the transition process; however they failed. Hence, causes of the failure of the EPP attracted and motivated the researcher to explain and clarify why these parties let their people down. This research tries to explain the major causes of failure. It starts with a literature which sheds light on various and different studies dealing with countries which witnessed democratic transition and the role played by their political parties in the transition process. Then, it proceeds to the methodological approach used to explain and clarify the research's argument. Then it proceeds to discussion and analysis of the causes which support the researcher's argument then conclusion and recommendations.

LITERATURE

As previously mentioned, political parties are indispensable for democratic transition; however, the period of transition provides the most extreme stress test of political parties' ability to respond to the voters' concerns.⁵ That's why a

³ <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/egypt/politics-parties.htm>

⁴ <http://www.egyptembassy.net/media/12.16.15-Egypt-Parliamentary-Elections-Fact-Sheet1.pdf>

⁵ Power, Greg, Shoot, Rebecca, A., ed. (2011) Political Parties in Democratic Transitions, Danish Institute for Parties And Democracy. 10.

lot of interested scholars wrote about the role of political parties in the democratic transitions in different transitioning states, for example, *The Case of Turkey* by Suat Kiniklioglu, *The Case of Indonesia* by Kevin Evans, and *The Case of Serbia* by Branimir Kuzmanovic and *The Case of South Africa* by Tom Lodge. Each of these studies handled the role of political parties in the transition process from a different aspect; or in other words, each depended on specific variable to measure the effectiveness of the political parties' role in the transition process.

Kiniklioglu, Suat In his article “The Case of Turkey: Normalizing Relations with The Military”, argued that during the five years, 2003-2008, Turkey witnessed a very crucial political crisis to consolidate the role of democracy and normalize the civil-military relationship.⁶ In other words, transformation from an authoritarian military rule to a civilian democratic rule was an inaccessible dream due to the hegemony of the armed forces over the legislative, executive and judicial authorities in the country. However, the AKP (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi), Justice and Development Party, managed to overcome most of the challenges which confronted the transformation process. The author in this article used some variables which enabled the AKP to rally the popular support and accelerate the political transition in Turkey. These variables include AKP's strong organizational structure, well-structured political and economic programs (clear party's programs), awareness and interest in local issues (responsiveness), polarizing youth, women and the disabled and motivate them to participate in the AKP's organizational structure and hence, increase the scope of the popular support to the AKP.

Another case which handles the role of political parties in the democratic transition process was the case of Indonesia. Evans, Kevin, in his article: “The Case of Indonesia: Establishing A Democratic System” stated that Indonesia has undergone a long and sometimes painful journey to become one of the developing world's most open political and economic systems with a bustling economy, relatively free civil and media space, and fair elections.⁷ Moreover, he found some similarities between Arab Spring countries, Egypt included, as they had a history of military strongmen, repressive state measures and control and youth resistance movements that effectively used the new and social media. However, Arab Spring political parties didn't know how to negotiate in a democratic way and as democratic citizens.⁸ In Indonesia, political parties recognized the need to negotiate with elements of the old regime by offering opportunities for different factions to cooperate towards political solutions. So, political parties here represented an integrative mechanism between the different divisions in society. They behave democratically without any concern of hegemony of any party or any faction. Moreover, Evans argued that While Indonesia neither adopted a formal ‘national dialogue’ format nor established any kind of serious reconciliation process, Indonesians did establish the means through which the citizens learned to influence the policies of the government and elected representatives; many chose to do this by either supporting or even founding political parties to promote or defend their interests.⁹

Kuzmanovic, Branimir, in his article: *The Case of Serbia: Building a political party post-transition*” argued that in politically fragmented societies with weak opposition parties and movements, it is essential for any political party which want to assist in the democratization process, the Democratic Party (DS) here, to have a clear and simple message that can be delivered to voters through all communication channels you have at your disposal. Doing so will give you an advantage

⁶ Kiniklioglu, Suat, (2011), *The Case of Turkey: Normalizing Relations with the Military*, Danish Institute for Parties And Democracy, pp.23-36.

⁷ Evans, Kevin, (2011) *The Case of Indonesia: Establishing A Democratic System*. Danish Institute for Parties and Democracy. p37.

⁸ Ibid, p37.

⁹ Ibid, p 43

over parties that lack preparation or a focused platform. Moreover, the message should provide citizens with a good picture of what you will do for them after the elections. So, the author here is depending on two major variables which could lead political parties to succeed and motivate democratization; these variables are well established communications channels which convey a clear and a simple message and responsiveness to the voters' demands through clear and accessible programs.

Lodge, Tom in his article: The Case of South Africa: Developing Party Politics in a Transitional Democracy argued that in comparison to many developing countries, South Africa was economically advanced, had a large middle class, a strong civil society, a well institutionalized state and a ready-made political party system.¹⁰ This atmosphere facilitated the role of political parties to participate and accelerate the transition process. The African National congress (ANC), the major political party in South Africa, managed and succeeded in establishing and strengthening a strong popular base through recruiting a colored and black citizens as well as consolidating white support encouraged political optimism among party strategists and it rapidly constructed an organized mass following, building upon the base it inherited from the United Democratic Front (UDF).¹¹ The ANC's communication and outreach wasn't confined to the internal front, but also it expanded to win international recognition from conservative Western governments. This step enabled ANC to negotiate and reach the aspired compromise. Moreover, the ANC constructed an organizational discipline manifested by a well-structured decision making process, where issues are intensively discussed to reach a final decision which is never irrevocable. Besides, ANC enhanced the prevalence of democracy based concepts such as power-sharing administration in which parties over five per cent of the vote would govern jointly for the first five years, political parties would be accorded positions in the cabinet in proportion to their share of vote and share positions in new provincial governments.¹²

The previous case studies have shown the challenges faced by political parties, and describe their role in the process of democratic transition and consolidation. Literature tends to emphasize the functions played by political parties in articulating and aggregating public demands, developing alternative visions and policies for governing the state, and testing the public support for those policies in elections. Political parties thus provide a choice to voters, a means of selecting political leaders, and a mechanism for holding the government to account. But, underpinning all of these is a more fundamental role. The task of political parties in new democracies is to change the relationship between people and power.¹³

The current research used the literature as standards to evaluate the performance of EPP in the post 30th of June 2013 Revolution. Of course a lot of challenges, as in the previous cases, faced these parties; however, Egyptian parties failed to face the challenges and to capture the opportunities to lead and consolidate the democratic transition process. Although Egypt didn't enjoy the status of South Africa; nevertheless, it wasn't a primitive political society either. So, Egypt is in an in- between stage which provided the political parties with the appropriate political atmosphere. The researcher tries to identify the major causes behind this failure depending on the variables used in the literature to evaluate the role of political parties in the aforementioned case studies.

¹⁰ Lodge, Tom, (2011), The Case of South Africa: Developing Party Politics in a Transitional Democracy. Danish Institute for Parties and Democracy, p 72.

¹¹ The United Democratic Front (UDF) was an anti-apartheid body that incorporated many anti-apartheid organisations. It was launched in 1983, in Mitchells Plain

¹² Lodge, Tom, ibid, pp. 70-71.

¹³ Power, Greg, Shoot, Rebecca, A., ed, ibid, p 83.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The methods section describes the rationale for the application of specific procedures or techniques used to identify, select, and analyze information applied to understanding the research problem, thereby, allowing the reader to critically evaluate a study's overall validity and reliability. The methodology of the research answers two main questions: How was the data collected or generated? And, how was it analyzed? This research adopts the empirical-analytical approaches which puts the study of political science in a similar manner that researchers study the natural sciences. This type of research focuses on objective knowledge, research questions that can be answered with yes or no and operational definitions of variables to be measured. The empirical-analytical group employs deductive reasoning that uses existing theory as a foundation for formulating hypotheses that need to be tested. This approach is focused on explanation.

- **Research Method**

In its endeavor to explain why the EPP didn't perform their functions well although prevalent political conditions catalyzed them to do so, this research adopts a mixture of quantitative and qualitative research methods. Quantitative methods emphasize objective measurements and the statistical, mathematical, or numerical analysis of data collected through polls, questionnaires, and surveys, or by manipulating pre-existing statistical data using computational techniques. Quantitative research focuses on gathering numerical data and generalizing it across groups of people or to explain a particular phenomenon. The researcher tries to measure the effectiveness of the EPP and their role in the democratization process in post 30/6 revolution through questionnaire which were circulated to about 800 (eight hundred) citizens from different ages, gender, occupations and governorates. The researcher included clusters of questions in the questionnaire; each cluster is oriented to measure a certain variable and how the variable's level affects the total effectiveness of the political parties. The researcher used four variables as dependent variables and a dependent variable. The independent variables are: political parties' well-constructed structure, communication and outreach, responsiveness and political performance, while, the dependent variable is the effectiveness of political parties in the transition process. The qualitative method is used to gain an understanding of underlying reasons behind the inefficiency of the EPP. It provides insights into the problem or helps to develop ideas to improve the level of the EPP's performance.



Figure 2

The researcher uses Likert Scale. A "Likert scale" is the sum of responses to several Likert items. A Likert item is simply a statement that the respondent is asked to evaluate by giving it a quantitative value on any kind of subjective or objective dimension, with level of agreement/disagreement being the dimension most commonly used.. When responding to a Likert questionnaire item, respondents specify their level of agreement or disagreement on a symmetric agree-disagree

scale for a series of statements. Thus, the range captures the intensity of their feelings for a given item.

- **Research Type**

This research is an explanatory research. The goal of all explanatory research is to answer the question of why. Explanatory research attempts to go above and beyond what exploratory and descriptive research to identify the actual reasons why a phenomenon occurs. Here, the researcher tries to reach the reasons behind the ineffectiveness of EPP in the democratic transition process. When one encounters an issue that is already known and has a description of it, one might begin to wonder why things are the way they are. The desire to know "why," to explain, is the purpose of explanatory research. It builds on exploratory and descriptive research and goes on to identify the reasons for something that occurs. Explanatory research looks for causes and reasons. For example, an exploratory research may discover that 70 percent of the Egyptian populations are not party members, whereas the explanatory researcher is more interested in learning why they aren't.

DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

After the ouster of the autocratic and authoritarian regime in the Egypt, the regime's party was dissolved and dozens of new political parties were established and authorized to create a diversified and fractioned landscape. Although, the EPP played a peripheral role in the revolutions, they still represent major medium which channels the mass's demands into an institutional political consensus.¹⁴ The revolutions offered a golden chance for EPP to assume an effective role in the transition process and to build a strong popular base through which they can exert a sort of pressures on the government to achieve their objectives and enable the masses to convert their demands into realities. Nevertheless, these parties let the masses down and failed to a large extent to take a position on the political map in Egypt. Of course a lot of factors intervene to result in this situation. The researcher argues that these factors are almost related to the weaknesses of these cardboard parties. While others argue that one shouldn't only blame the political parties for this, but also the prevalent political culture as well. People in a country like Egypt always marginalize the role of parties; they always look and support the authority and authority related parties. Although this argument might seem plausible; however, the researcher argues that it is the weak parties which created this concept between the people as they didn't assume the role of political socialization. A prominent example which supports the researcher's view is the previously banned religious movements, for example, Muslim Brotherhood and its political party, the Freedom and Justice Party. Although, these movements were banned, they managed to rally the popular support through the well-established organizational structure, their communication and outreach through the social networks they created in the Egyptian society and their responsiveness to the people's demands in education, health, food and all social services. If we compare between other political parties and these movements and their affiliated political parties, we will find that the former have deficiencies in all aforementioned aspects. In the following parts the researcher is going to assess the performance of the EPP to identify the level of EPP's effectiveness through using some of the aforementioned indicators. To assess the performance of political parties various indicators could be used. For example these indicators include, first, the level of institutionalization, e.g. party's ideology, well-organized programs, well-established organizational structure, coherence, clear regulations for membership and qualified calibers, second, communication and outreach, e.g., availability of local offices or structures to directly contact with the individual inside the provinces and governorates, availability of clear websites, ability to express the parties' views on local issues, the accessibility of information to the public and ability to present their programs, third,

¹⁴ Kausch, Kristina, (2012), Political Parties in Young Arab Democracies, FRIDE, p 2.

responsiveness, e.g., responsiveness to public opinion, concern about local and national problems, women, youth and minorities and ability to establish the popular base of the EPP and fourth, political performance, e.g., political socialization and mobilization, interest articulation and aggregation, participation in decisions of national importance, contribution to consensus building and bridging of cleavages in society and finally credibility.

As previously mentioned, to assess the research's argument about the ineffectiveness of the EPP, the researcher adopted the quantitative approach through which a questionnaire was made and distributed to a sample of 800 citizens with different backgrounds. This questionnaire is divided into clusters of questions which relate to the variables used in this research to evaluate the effectiveness of the EPP in the political democratization process. As previously mentioned, the researcher used Likert Scale. The first cluster of questions relates to the level of institutionalization in these parties.

Before the researcher asks about the organizational structure of these parties and other variables, the researcher posed a general question which might identify the orientation of the whole questionnaire. This question is "Do you think that political parties could help in democratic transition in post revolution Egypt? Different evaluative answers were given to this question. The researcher found that about 8.9% strongly agreed, 40.5% agreed, 12.7% neutral, 24.1% disagree and 13.9% strongly disagree. The following Pie-Chart clarifies it.

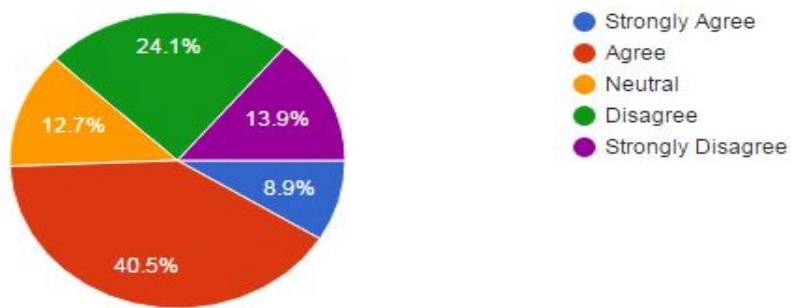


Figure 3

From the above-shown percentages, the researcher found that the percentage of those who think that political parties couldn't help in the democratic transition (Disagree and strongly- disagreed combined) is about 38% while the percentage of those who think that political parties could help in the democratic transition (Strongly agree-Agree) is about 50%. This means that about half of the sample hoped that EPP motivate and assist Egypt in its transition process. This opening question aimed at exploring how Egyptians think about the efficiency of the EPP to support and accelerate the democratic transition process. Although, the difference between the protagonists and the opponents is not very big; however, it is an indicator of the inspired role of the EPP. Here the researcher poses a question, is this hope manifested by reality? In other words, if we consider the aforementioned variables, organizational structure, communication and outreach, responsiveness and political performance, are the EPP effective enough to enable the Egyptian people to realize their objectives? The following parts of the research will consider each variable and vividly give an answer to this question.

Level of Institutionalization

To become successful in the political contest and to influence on the formation of political opinion a party requires a stable organization. A stable organization requires a well-established ideology and an institutional setup.

The institutional set up may differ from one party to another. The institutional setup may be vertical where party structures are divided into levels in a pyramid shape and decision making process is centralized, or the setup may be horizontal where the party is divided into partitions and the decision making process is decentralized, or finally the setup may be hybrid where the setup is a mixture of the vertical and horizontal structures and all levels and partitions participate in the decision making process. A stable organization enables the political party to be politically active through conducting regular membership meetings, support, promote and integrate members and discuss local political issues and initiatives.¹⁵ The local or regional party organisations should arrange their own political conventions, nominate candidates for local or regional elections, coordinate the activities of the party at a local or regional level, and maintain contact with non-partisan organisations in the local context (like religious communities, civic or professional associations etc.) They should also develop their own local political positions (in line with the principal programme of the entire party) and local government programmes. The local organizational structures are the grounds of party's democracy. Finally, the members at the local level also conduct the campaigns for local, regional or national elections.¹⁶ In this context, a group of questions were given to the respondents concerning EPP's Organizational structure. These questions are related to the EPP's ideology, clear regulations for members, sufficient internal structures to perform the parties' functions and the capacity for developing new calibers and party leaders.

For the first question which is related to the parties' ideology, the researcher found a question was posed to the respondents and it is stated as follows: do the EPP have a clear ideology? The researcher found that 27.8 % strongly disagreed, 55.7% disagreed, 2.5% agree, 2.5 strongly agree and about 11.4% neutral. So if combined together, we will find that about 83.5% think that EPP don't have a clear ideology which makes it vague for individuals to identify the parties' stand or position. Of course such vagueness would affect the clarity of the parties' programs and hence inability of these parties to attract new members.

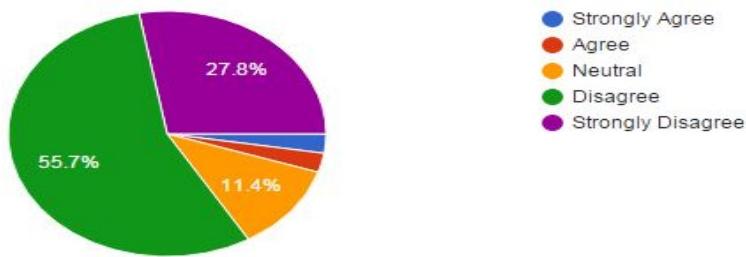


Figure 4

Concerning the well-organized program, a question was posed to the respondents and it is stated as follows: do the EPP have a well-organized program? the researcher found that 27.8 % strongly disagreed, 55.7% disagreed, with a totality of about 83.5% think that EPP don't have clear and well-organized programs, 2.5% agree, 2.5 strongly agree and about 11.4% neutral. The researcher found that the percentages in this question are identical to the percentages of the previous question. So if combined together, we will find that about 83.5% think that EPP don't have well-organized and full-fledged programs which make it vague for individuals to identify the parties' vision stand or position about future. Feeling curious about this, the researcher asked one of the respondents why he thought that the EPP don't have clear and well-organized

¹⁵ Grabow, Karsten, & Hofmeister, Wilhelm, (2011), Political Parties Functions and Organization in Democratic Societies, Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, pp. 27-28.

¹⁶ Ibid.

programs, he simply said “parties without a vision how come they have well-defined program, it is ridiculous, he added.

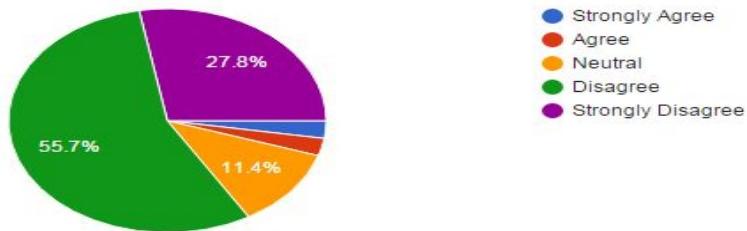


Figure 5

With regards to related to membership, members are the fundamental part of any party and its most important connecting link to the society. Members of a party have greater political effect than citizens who do not belong to any party. For the question, which is related to the well-established regulations for membership, a question was posed to the respondents and it is stated as follows: do the EPP have well-documented regulations for membership? the researcher found that about 19% strongly disagree, 53.2% disagreed, while 6.3% agree, 2.5% strongly agree while 25.35 is neutral. So, about 72.2% think that the EPP don't have clear regulations concerning the requirements for membership, while 8.7% think EPP have.

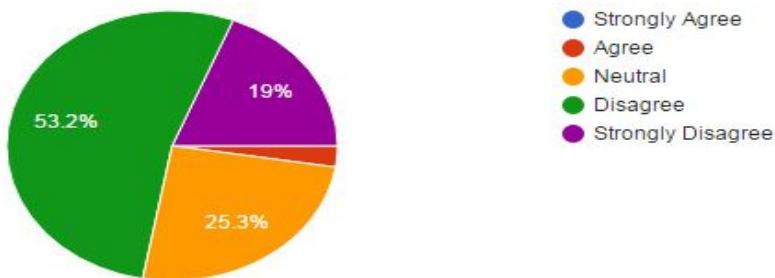


Figure 6

Concerning the internal structure, a question was posed to the respondents and it is stated as follows: do EPP develop sufficient internal structures to perform the parties' functions? The roles political parties play in society - from policy making to recruiting people for positions in government - depend heavily on a party's internal organization. The better organized the internal structure, the stronger the party's response when faced with sudden challenges such as leadership changes, elections or reforms within society. Internal sub-divisions, for examples, committees, cells, administrations are very important for the parties to perform its functions and fulfill its obligations. The researcher found that 29.1% strongly disagree, 46.8% disagree, 8.9% agree, while 15.2% is neutral. Therefore, about 77% think that the EPP don't have sufficient internal structures to perform the parties' functions, while 9% think EPP have.

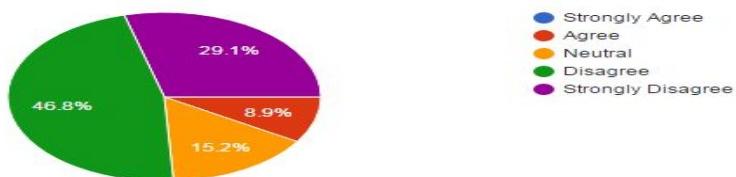


Figure 7

With regard to the fourth question, related to the EPP's capacity for developing new calibers, in other words do the EPP develop party leaders? a question was posed to the respondents and it is stated as follows: do the EPP have the capacity for developing new calibers? The researcher found that 22.8% strongly disagree, 51.9% disagree, 6.3% agree, 2.5% strongly agree while 16.5% is neutral. Therefore, about 75% think that the EPP don't have the capacity of the formation of future leaders, while about 9% think EPP have. In the modern mass democracy, political parties, its leaders and members would inevitably confront new issues and questions and take positions in day-to-day developments and social change. Hence, it is indispensable that the parties prepare its representatives and members to assume the responsibility and face the challenges. This is the task of political education which should be oriented to the ideology, basic values and principles of the parties, understanding and analyzing political issues and preparation for political work.

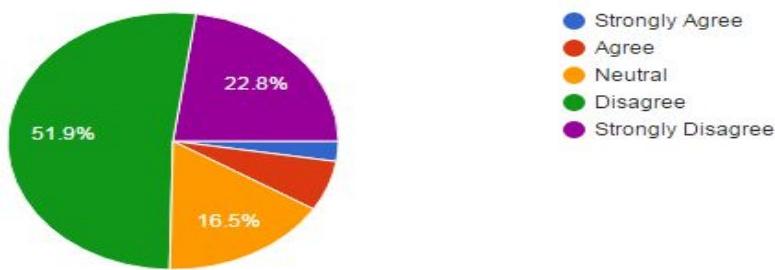


Figure 8

From the aforementioned results, we can deduce that most of the respondents think that the EPP lack the suitable organizational structure which enables them to provide an understanding of critical domestic issues. As about 83% of the respondents view that the EPP don't have clear ideologies, so respondents are confused about the major principles which orient these parties. The ideology is a comprehensive view of the status quo and the way to change it. Since these parties don't have the vision, they won't be able to assist in the transformation. Besides, the EPP don't have well-organized programs which create a lot of doubts about their ability to reform or change. Party programs perform various functions; the core party program identifies the identity of the party and provides a general orientation to the public and voters about the major principles and ideas of the party. Parties' programs distinguish parties from each other; these programs illustrate political aspirations and plans. Moreover, these parties don't have sufficient local offices to contact directly with citizens in their provinces and governorates. Besides, they don't have clear requirements for membership. Consequently to be entitled to membership in these parties is a haphazard process which will lead to disintegration and conflicts inside the parties. In addition, about 76% of the respondents think that the EPP don't have the sufficient internal structures which enable the EPP to perform their functions achieve their objectives. Lacking the required sub-divisions and committees would hinder integration and communication not only on the internal level inside these parties but on the external level with other parties and the public as well. These structures represent the channels through which the public's demands are transferred to the parties' leaders who can in turn transfer them to the government. Finally, about 75% think that the EPP don't represent a motivating environment for developing new calibers who can work for the sustainability of these parties. These parties lack the intuitive environment which would qualify calibers to discuss and analyze the internal problems inside the parties and the national problems in Egypt.

With regards to the cases included in the literature, the researcher found that there is a big disparity between the EPP and political parties in Turkey, Serbia, Indonesia and South Africa. While the former lack the strong and qualified

organizational structure, the latters are supported and manifested by well-established, well-organized organizational structure and well-distributed local offices. An example is the AKP in Turkey. One of the key contributing factors to the AKP's success in the elections is the party's organizational structure which led to strong internal cohesion. A clear AKP's ideology, conservative democracy as the founders of the party reject defining the AKP in religious terms, the strong leadership, local party offices with highly qualified and well-trained calibers which served as private offices for the candidates and, later, for members of parliament. Besides, these local offices represent a key to engage with the electorate in a face to face style which enables the AKP's candidates to be closer and acquainted with the electorate's demands. Concerning membership, AKP had widened the membership base by developing inclusive party structures through depending greatly on the activism and proper organization of its women's and youth branches, empowering women in party structures, encouraging youth participation, including and involving disabled persons.

EPP's Communication and Outreach

Good communication, internal or external, is a central concern for any political party. Internal communication for a party is important not only to inform its own members, but also to represent party positions towards the society. This is a very relevant function of the internal integration mechanism inside political parties. Although internal communication is a significant concern for political parties to subsist and perform their political functions well, external communication between political decision-makers and the public has progressively developed into a power factor. Therefore, political power has been defined as a product of the capacity to influence public opinion and the capability to ensure one's own power position through smart and strategically favorable decisions.¹⁷ To measure how effective the external communication of the EPP with the public in Egypt is, a group of questions were asked. The first is related to the strong communication with the public through availability of parties' offices in the different governorates; the second is related to the availability of clear websites, the third is related to ability to express the parties' views on local issues, the fourth is related to the accessibility of information to the public and the fifth question is related to the ability of the EPP to present their programs well.

For the first question related to the availability of local offices or structures to directly contact with the individual inside the provinces and governorates, the researcher found that 29.1% strongly disagree, 46.8% disagree, 8.9% agree, while 15.2% is neutral. So a totality of about 76% of respondents assures that the EPP don't have a sufficient number of local offices which can contact directly with them.

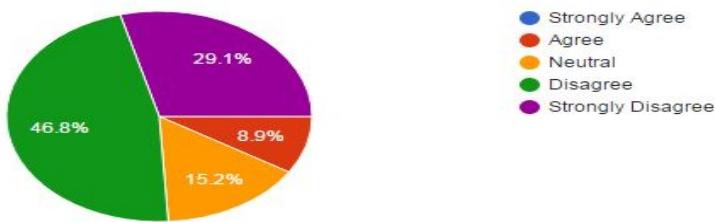


Figure 9

The second posed question is related to the availability of clear websites for the EPP. About 19% strongly disagreed and 53.2% disagreed, with a totality of 72.2% who said that the EPP don't have clear websites, while only, a

¹⁷ Ibid, p 42.

totality of about 2.5% said they have and about 25.3% are neutral.

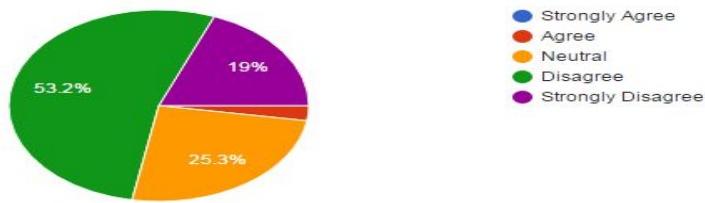


Figure 10

The third question is related to the ability to express the parties' views on local issues. Here the researcher finds that the respondents viewed that the EPP don't have the qualified members or candidate who can express about the views, principles and programs of their parties well. About 22.8% strongly disagreed and 51.9% disagreed, which means a totality of about 75% of the respondents viewed that the EPP lacked the ability to express about their parties well. While the researcher finds that 2.5% strongly agree and 6.3% agreed, with a totality of about 9%, that the EPP can and about 16.5% are neutral.

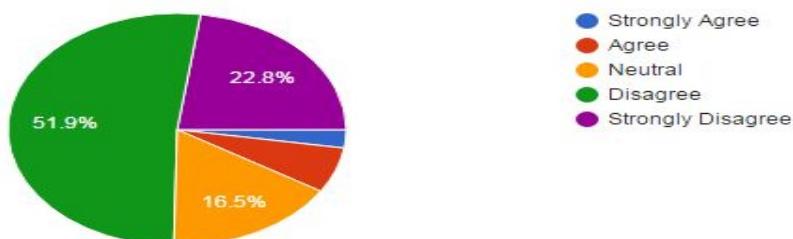


Figure 11

The fourth question is related to the accessibility of information to the public through the EPP's channels. In other words is it easy for citizens to get information about the EPP? Here, the researcher finds that the respondents' answers are somehow different from the previous answers and the percentages differed pro the EPP in this question. The researcher finds that about 17.7% strongly disagreed and 34.2% disagreed, with a totality of about 53% disagreed, while 1.3% strongly agree and 19% agreed, with a totality of 20.3% agreed about the accessible information and 27.8% is neutral. The researcher wondered why the answer and percentages differed in this question from other questions. The researcher asked some of the respondents about this and the respondents said that the EPP don't through their weak channels provide the required information to the public; however, the citizens get most of this information from the mass media. So, it isn't the EPP, but the available mass media.

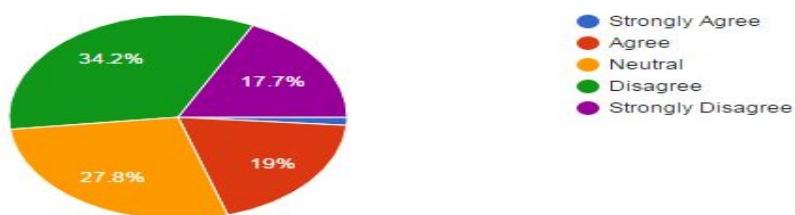


Figure 12

The fifth question is related to the ability of the EPP to present their programs well. As previously mentioned, party program identifies the identity of the party and provides a general orientation to the public and voters about the major principles and ideas adopted by the party. In this context a question is posed to respondents about how vividly are parties' programs expressed and presented to the public or in other words do you think that Egyptian political parties present their programs well to the public opinion? The researcher finds that 27.8% strongly disagreed, 55.7% disagreed with a totally of about 84% disagreed that the EPP can present their programs well, while, 2.5% strongly agreed, 2.5% agreed, with a totality of 5%, who think that the EPP can and 11.4% are neutral. From these percentages, it is apparent that the EPP do not put much effort into the development of a party programme and pay little attention to it, as they are mostly identified more through their representatives than through their programmes. Moreover, they underestimate the role of a comprehensive programme for the profile and identification of its members with the party. They don't give time for the discussion of the programme for the purpose of updating the party programme, thus precluding and hindering the opportunity to lead the programmatic debate internally and with other social groupings.

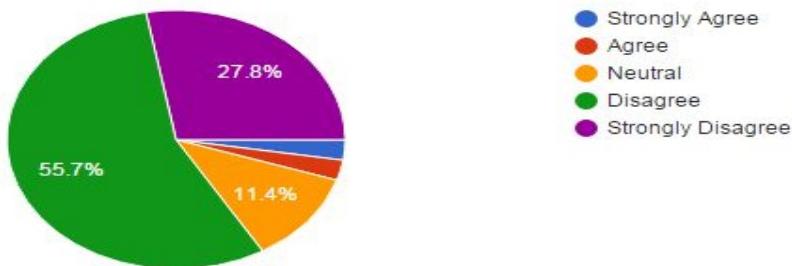


Figure 13

From the above mentioned group of questions, the researcher found that the EPP have very weak communication channels and skills which deprive them of various advantages. The external communication may constitute everything on offer by advanced mass communication and political marketing. Regular press releases and press conferences, and publication of bulletins and positions are the basics for party communication; the internet nowadays is of special relevance for modern party communication.¹⁸ The party website is a main source for communication and should be continuously updated. The presence of political parties in modern social media, for example, Facebook and Twitter, is also indispensable to deliver their messages and present their ideologies, views, principles and leaders to the public. by far the most important media outlet in Egypt for people to get information about the views of political parties is private TV channels and only a tiny proportion get their information from newspapers, the internet and social media. Local party offices should have their own website to communicate issues of local relevance. Besides, Visual platforms like YouTube should be used to deliver the messages of the parties and to present their calibers and candidates to the public and electorates. In addition, the EPP don't dedicate attention to clarification and elaboration on their programs. Most of the EPP don't prepare draft programs to be discussed internally, by party members, or externally with the public or the electorates. A previous study stated that one of the major weaknesses of the EPP is their communication and outreach; means of communication with the public suffer from many problems either on the level of discourse used to address groups or on the level of organized events. Weakness in organized events to attract citizens is one of the major weaknesses in party popularity, which was proven through the

¹⁸ Ibid. p 44

ratio of participating citizens reaching 96.3%.¹⁹

EPP Responsiveness

Parties' responsiveness is related to the focusing of parties on the core issues citizens with their diversities, women, youth, minorities and disabled care about. Moreover, responsiveness is concerned with establishing mechanisms to understand and respond to the voters and electorates' concerns. The duty of political parties is to assist the public to comprehend, perceive, navigate and participate in shaping the transition process. They ought to provide citizens with the chance of involvement and influence consolidate public faith and legitimacy in the party system, in specific, and the political system in general and help to establish a common political culture.²⁰ Concerning EPP's responsiveness towards the local and public concerns a group of questions were posed to measure the degree of responsiveness. These questions start with a question about responsiveness to public opinion, concern about local and national problems, women, youth and minorities and finally, the popular base of the EPP.

For measuring the degree of the EPP's responsiveness, the researcher posed a group of questions. The first question is related to whether the EPP express about the public opinion or not. In this question the researcher finds that about 22.8% strongly disagree, 41.8% disagree, with a totality of about 66% who disagree, while 16.5% agree and 26.6% neutral.

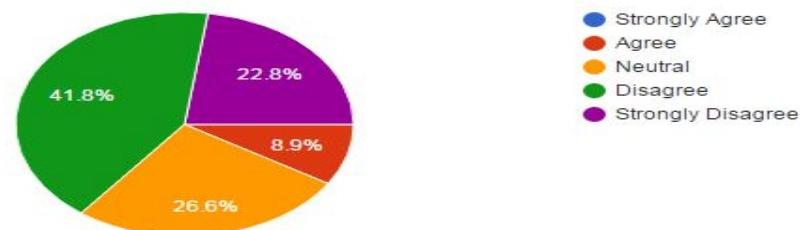


Figure 14

The second question is related to the EPP's concern about local and national problems. In this question the researcher finds that about 17.7% strongly disagree, 30.4 % disagree, with a totality of about 48% who disagree about the EPP concern, while 1.3% strongly agree, 21.5% agree, with a totality of about 23% agreed that the EPP's concern and 29.1% neutral.

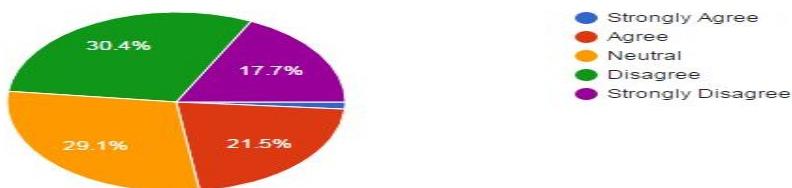


Figure 15

The following questions are related to representativeness to youth, women, and minorities demands. When youth, women and minorities are represented in the party structure, this means that the party considers the demands of these

¹⁹ El-Agati, Mohamed et al, (2012), Political Parties and Public Opinion in Egypt, Arab Forum for Alternatives, p14

²⁰ Power, Greg, Shoot, Rebecca, A., ed., ibid, pp.15-16.

categories, or in other words, the party is responding to their demands. With regards to the youth demands, a question was posed about the degree of responsiveness of the EPP to the youth and their demands. The question is Do you think that Egyptian political parties care about youth demands? Taken into consideration that the youth in Egypt were the gear of the revolutions and their expectations and aspirations about future were unlimited. The researcher expected that the EPP played on this chord and expected that they pay a lot of attention to the demands of the youth; however, the answers were frustrating. The researcher finds that about 27.8% strongly disagree, 35.4 % disagree, with a totality of about 53% who disagree about the EPP concern, while 10.1% agree and 26.6% neutral.

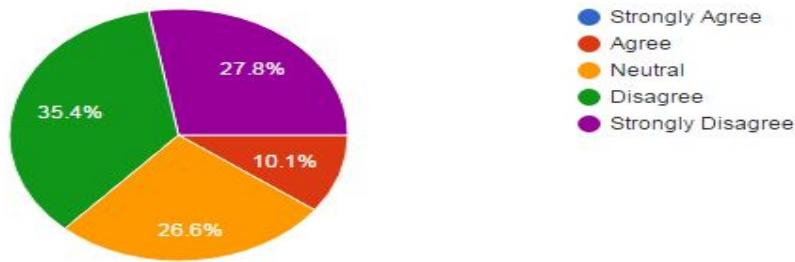


Figure 16

With regard to the EPP's concern about woman's rights, a question was posed about the EPP's consideration about the rights and demands of women, as women in Egypt constitute about 49% of the total population. Women were crucial actors in all steps of the democratization process experienced by Egypt since 2011. They have massively participated in the 2014 referendum to validate the new Constitution. As women constitute about half of Egypt's population, the researcher also expected that women's demands will be considered by the EPP; nevertheless, the result was disappointing. The researcher, in this context, asked the respondents: Do you think that Egyptian political parties care about woman's rights? The results are as follows, about 21.5% strongly disagree, and 39.2 % disagree, with a totality of about 61% who disagree about the EPP concern about women's demands, while 12.7% agree and 26.6% neutral.

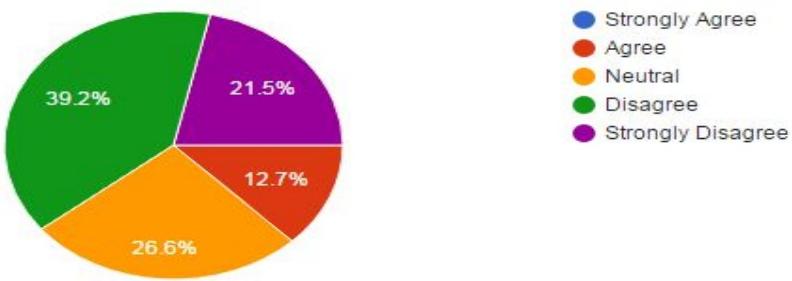


Figure 17

Concerning minorities in Egypt, minorities are categorized into religious and linguistic. With regard to religious minorities, Egypt is a predominantly Sunni Muslim country with small numbers of Shiites. The Christian minority's number is about ten millions (percentage of Christians range from 10%-15 %). There are three main Christian religious groups/communities that are recognized in Egypt. Each community comprises different denominations or rites. These are: The Orthodox Community, including Coptic, Greek, Armenian, and Syrian denominations; The Catholic community, including Coptic, Greek, Armenian, Syrian, Maronite, Chaldean, and Latin denominations; and the Protestant community, which include many denominations all considered as belonging to the same religious community. There are also two

Jewish communities, the Qaraitic and Rabbinic, as well as a community of Baha'is.²¹ Linguistic minorities include small communities of Armenians and Greeks, principally in the cities of Cairo and Alexandria; groups of Berber origin in the oases of the Western Desert; and Nubians living in cities in Lower Egypt and in villages clustered along the Nile in Upper Egypt. The Arabic speaking Bedouins (nomads) in the Western and Eastern Deserts and the Sinai Peninsula constitute the principal cultural minority. Several hundred Europeans, mostly Italians and French, also lived in Egypt.²² In this context, the researcher posed a question which is related to the EPP's concern about minorities and their rights, the question is: Do you think that Egyptian political parties care about minorities' rights? The results are as follows, about 21.5% strongly disagree, and 45.6 % disagree, with a totality of about 67% who disagree about the EPP concern about minorities' demands, while 12.7% agree and 20.3% neutral.

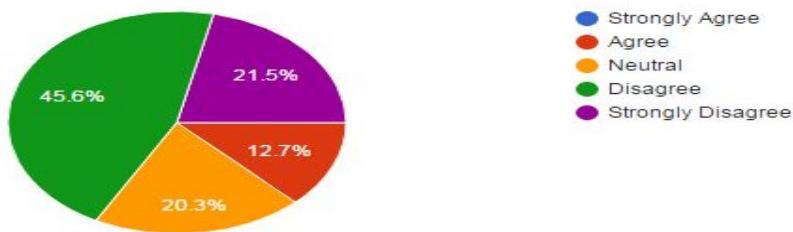


Figure 18

The last question, concerning responsiveness, asks about whether the EPP have a popular base. Of course, the existence of a big popular base indicates how responsive the existing political parties are. If the parties are concerned about the local issues and concerns of the public, this would be a motive for the parties to rally the popular support and vice versa. In this question the researcher finds that about 11.4% strongly disagree, 49.4% disagree, with a totality of about 61% who disagree about the EPP having a popular base, while 16.5% agree that the EPP have and 22.8% neutral.

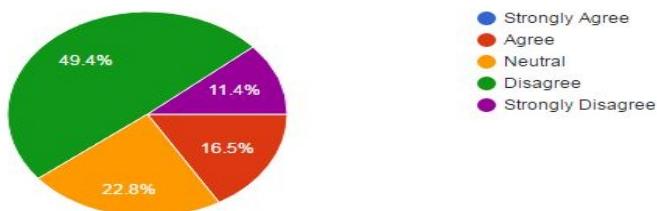


Figure 19

Responsiveness is a key-factor in attracting new members and enlarging the popular base for political parties. The key lesson appears to be that if political parties are willing to establish their membership and widen the scope of popularity, they firstly owe it to their responsiveness to their supporters' demands; otherwise those supporters will go elsewhere. The previous questions showed that the EPP exhibit a low standard of responsiveness. When asked about the EPP's concern about the public opinion, the respondents feel that these parties are detached from reality; about 48% assure that these parties are not oriented to the public interest but their leaders' interests about elections and authority. One of the respondents when asked about the EPP said "what are you talking about, do we really have parties?" another respondent

²¹ <http://www.islamopediaonline.org/country-profile/egypt/religious-minorities-and-freedom-religion>

²² <http://countrystudies.us/egypt/>

said "These parties don't offer us the services we need". El-Agati in his study about political parties in Egypt stated that the fact that political parties do not focus on the roles seen as important ones by the citizens largely explains their orientation regarding the ability of parties to influence the political Egypt. The inefficient responsiveness to the public's concerns caused inability of the EPP to enhance the transition. It also explains the evaluation of parties' political practices in general. Of the surveyed people in El-Agatis study, 71.2% stated that political parties do not affect the political situation in Egypt, while only 28.9% believed that parties influence the political situation in Egypt. Also, 82.7% stated that political parties do not adopt successful political practices, while only 17.3% believed that the practices of political parties are successful.²³

Moreover, for the second question which is related to the local or national problems, the researcher found that about 48% view the EPP are unconcerned about the national problems, the economy, security and political transformation. Most of the respondents viewed that EPP's programmes do not either deal with economic problems or suggest any solutions to these problems. This indicates a clear disconnect between the EPP and the public. The other following questions which are related to the EPP's to youth, women and minorities. The researcher finds that about 53% of the respondents viewed that the EPP are unresponsive to the youth demands, 61% who disagree about the EPP's concern about women's demands and 67% who disagree about the EPP's concern about minorities' demands. Concerning the youth in Egypt, state estimates about indicate that the youth's percentage is about 33% out of the total population in 2015(33 million out of 90.6 million people).²⁴ Youth are mainly concerned about economic and political demands. Youth are concerned with employment, appropriate salaries and wages, social justice and economic welfare. They are also concerned about political transformation, prevalence of democracy and effective participation in the political life through the political parties or other structures which enable them to have a heard voice. If we look at the EPP's members, one could hardly find youth represented in the most of the EPP. It was narrated that the rate of youth participation in political parties and team work or volunteer or in clubs does not exceed 2.5%.²⁵ When asked about youth participation in the Rally party, the spokesman for the Rally said that there are young people in order to enable the political parties to fulfill its obligations, as the party assembly includes a large number of young people and has a progressive young people, which includes members of the party of the Youth Union and have their representative in the party's Political Bureau and the Secretariat of the party. On the other hand, when asked about the name of the youth representative in the party's political bureau he said he did not know his name, "not remember!!", the member of the supreme body of the Egyptian Democratic Party said that the supreme body representative of the youth is more than 35% of young people less than 35 years involved in party decision-making as there are organizations within the party representing the democratic youth and prepares them in the school of political cadre through education and training programs. Other parties' spokesmen, also, talked about the activation and importance of youth participation in the political life; however, when asked to give real evidence of youth participation, they didn't. This means that actual and effective youth participation is missing because supporting documentary evidences are missing. Concerning women's participation, although all parties recognize the great role and powers played by Egyptian women during the 25th of January and 30th of June revolutions onwards, and their stance during the referendum on the constitution and presidential elections, they don't know a certain percentage of women's representation. In the Free Egyptians Party, the media spokesman for the party said the percentage of women representation is not determined. For Rally Party, the president, who does not know the actual number of women party, justified his ignorance that such things

²³ El-Agati, Mohamed, ibid, p57.

²⁴ El Watan Newspaper, (October,2015) Report, Report: youth participation in parties, clubs, volunteer work.

²⁵ Ibid.

are known more by the Party Secretary General. The case itself was present in the Dignity party when its president said he did not know the number or proportion or even the role of women within the party, arguing that he had no accurate count ratios. Moreover, Secretary General of the Congress Party said that the proportion of women members of the party reaches 10% at the central level. At the level of political parties of political Islam, there was no representation of women in the upper body or any important position in the party that's what a member of the supreme body of Al-Nour Party confirmed.²⁶ Minority participation is a key concern in ensuring human rights and equal opportunities for all members of a society. With regard to minorities, in Egypt the most important minority is the Copts or Christians; the Copts represent about 10-12% of the Egyptian population. Other minorities, such as Greeks, Armenians and Nubians don't receive much or hardly receive any attention from the EPP.

Therefore, talking about the EPP's popular base is a talk about the impossible. Parties which aren't concerned about national or local critical issues, aren't concerned about the public opinion, aren't responsive to the various segments' demands in society, youth, women and minorities, can never be able to establish a strong popular base.

If compared to the AKP in Turkey, the success of the AKP is due to the active participation of youth and women through the well-established youth and women's branches. This enhanced the AKP visibility in local provinces through party representatives, a youth branch and a women's branch. The youth branch of the party facilitates the implementation of a successful election campaign that takes candidates into the most remote provinces and districts.²⁷ Concerning women, despite the party's conservative agenda on family values and religion, the mobilization of women has been a remarkable success as the party managed to engage hundreds of thousands of women in Turkish polities. The party's women's branch regularly organizes meetings, discussion groups and other social activities in every neighborhood in this country. Besides, they collect concerns and proposals from their local communities and keep the momentum high among female members or sympathizers of the party. With regard to minorities, in democratic regimes minorities are entitled to influence the formulation and implementation of public policies and represented by their political and community leaders. Many examples from different countries demonstrated minorities' participations in the political life, for example, the municipal Pakistan People's Party was formed in the town of Bradford, England in 1970, in Australia, the deliberately multicultural Unity Party was created in 1996, in opposition to Pauline Hanson's One Nation Party. It fielded a slate of candidates in the 1998 national elections, 70 percent of whom were from non-English speaking backgrounds. In France, the "Liste Motivée" presented a highly multicultural slate of candidates in 2001 municipal elections in the city of Toulouse.²⁸

EPP Political Performance

Political performance of political parties is one of the most significant indicators of their effectiveness. Political performance is related to how efficient and effective are parties' mechanisms in achieving their and their communities' goals and objectives. Of the various parties' mechanisms, the researcher selected four mechanisms through which political parties can perform their expected functions well and which, in turn, would increase the parties' popularity and public support. These mechanisms are political socialization and mobilization, interest articulation and aggregation, participation in decisions of national importance, contribution to consensus building and bridging of cleavages in society and finally credibility.

²⁶ Woman Representation in Egyptian Political Parties Report, (2015), <http://www.albawabnews.com>

²⁷ Power, Greg, Shoot, Rebecca, A., ed., *ibid*, p 34.

²⁸Bird, Karen, (2003), The Political Representation of Women and Ethnic Minorities in Established Democracies: A Framework for Comparative Research

Concerning the first mechanism, political socialization and mobilization, the researcher looks at political socialization as a process of political learning. It is the process through which citizens develop political beliefs, values, norms, attitudes and opinions that influence their behavior in social spheres. Political parties are looked upon to inculcate national values in place of parochial values. No doubt that in premature democratic societies, political parties represent an indispensable medium through which individuals can learn and acquire political values and beliefs and constitute their political ideology. In other words, political parties play an important role in increasing political awareness and consolidating political culture. But, underpinning all these is the task of political parties to change the relationship between people and power. Political socialization leads to smooth political mobilization. Mobilization refers to the deployment of resources for purposeful action to achieve a specific political or social goal. Concerning political parties, political mobilization is the deployment of people and motivating the already politically socialized individuals to support the parties' campaigns and candidates in the elections. In this context, the researcher posed a question about the success of the EPP in the socialization and mobilization processes; this question is stated as follows: are the EPP able to socialize the Egyptians and increase their political awareness and hence easily mobilize them? For the first question related to the political socialization and mobilization, the researcher found that 29.1% strongly disagree, 46.8% disagree, 8.9% agree, while 15.2% is neutral. So a totality of about 76% of respondents assures that the EPP neither have the ability to socialize citizens nor the skills to mobilize them, while only 8.9% think they have.

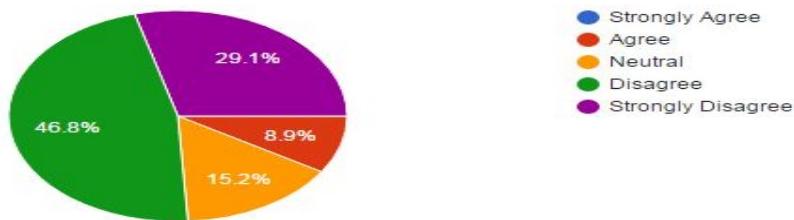


Figure 20

Interest articulation and aggregation is the task of combining and harmonizing different demands and expressing them into coherent policy formulation. Political parties are the principal agents to articulate and aggregate public demands and present them to the political decision making apparatus. The ability to do this by political parties is the major determinant of the level of performance of political parties. Responding to the voters with their varieties and differences is a crucial issue for political parties. The second question related to Interest articulation and aggregation is stated as follows: are the EPP interested about articulating and aggregating various and different public demands? The researcher found that 17.7% strongly disagree, 30.4% disagree, 21.5% agree, while 29.1% is neutral. So, about half of the respondents or a totality of about 48% of respondents assures that the EPP don't perform this function, while 21.5% think they do.

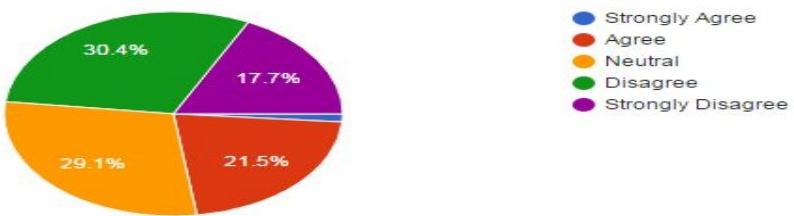


Figure 21

Egypt as a transitioning state suffers mainly from different economic problems, for example, budget deficit, trade deficit, depreciation and devaluation of the local currency and high rates of inflation and unemployment. Moreover, democratic transition persists as an essential political inspiration facing a lot of impediments precluding its achievement. All of these problems must be considered by the governments which must make decisions to face and overcome these problems. Unless political parties push governments to make strategies and action plans to confront and overcome them, suffering and grievance will continue. Concerning the active or inactive participation of the EPP in the decisions concerning national problems a question is stated as follows: do you think the EPP actively participate and make a sort of pressure on the government concerning solutions to national problems. The researcher found that 17.7% strongly disagree, 36.7% disagree, 16.5% agree, 1.3% strongly agree, while 27.8% is neutral. So, about more than half of the respondents or a totality of about 55% of respondents assures that the EPP don't perform this function, while 17.8% think they do.

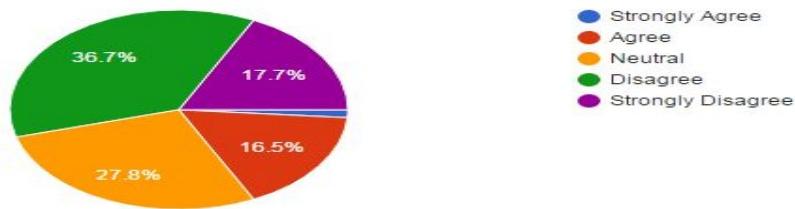


Figure 22

Egypt as one of the Arab Spring states witnessed a fluid transition process in which religion and different religious fractions in society initiated a sort of turmoil, especially in the year of the Muslim Brotherhood's rule under Mohammed Morsi. Egypt was about to face a sectarian strife between Muslims and Christians and between Muslim themselves as the Muslim Brothers divided the Egyptian Society between real Muslims, them and their supporters, and non-Muslims, their opponents; they used George W. Bush's words in his unjust war in Iraq " if you aren't with us, you are against us.". Of course, negative impacts of these divisions created an antagonistic atmosphere in the Egyptian society. An important role of the EPP in such dramatic situations is to try to reconcile between the conflicting fractions and to bridge cleavages in society. A question concerning this function was posed to respondents; this question is stated as follows: do you think that the EPP assume their role in reconciling between conflicting fractions and creating a state of harmony and concord in Egypt? The researcher found that 17.7% strongly disagree, 39.2% disagree, 15.2% agree, while 27.8% is neutral. So, about more than half of the respondents or a totality of about 58% of respondents assures that the EPP don't perform this function, while 15.2% think they do.

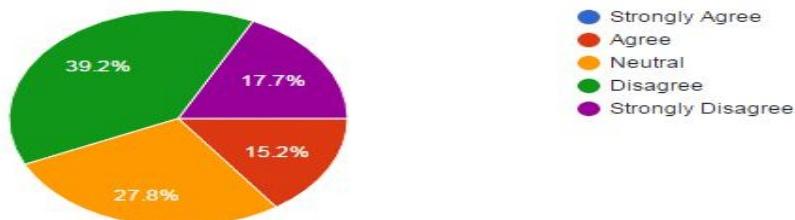


Figure 23

The last question is related to the EPP's credibility. Credibility is as source of political capital; to be credible, political parties need to be competent, trustworthy, and caring for their audience. In other words: they need to have the necessary skills and knowledge, they need to be honest, and they should not be in politics for personal gain. It is argued

that credibility is a source of political capital for leaders, meaning that being considered credible lends a leader political capital to spend.²⁹ Of course during elections campaign a lot of promises are given to the voters and electorates; however, commitment to these promises is a highly debatable issue. Giving promises requires the ability to make them true which in turn increase the political parties' political capital. Concerning credibility of the EPP, a question was posed to the respondents; this question is stated as follows, do you trust political parties when they make promises? The researcher found that 29.1% strongly disagree, 39.2% disagree, while 27.8% is neutral. The researcher was surprised to find that not a single respondent agreed that the EPP have credibility. So, a totality of about 68% of respondents assures that the EPP don't perform this function, while not a single respondent thinks they have.



Figure 24

Political performance of political parties is a decisive indicator for their success or failure. In other words, performance is highly related to the assumption of the expected roles, and performing of standard or generic functions. To assess the success or failure of the EPP in Egypt, a variety of questions were posed to the respondents. The answers to these questions gave a clear picture about the political performance of the EPP. The EPP showed a low percentage on the scale of political performance. Inability to meet the aspirations of the public concerning political socialization, interest articulation and aggregation, participation in decisions of national interests and reconciliation between conflicting parties negatively impact the credibility of the EPP as a lot of promises concerning these issues are continuously made by these parties. If compared to other political parties, we will find that the Tanganyika African National Union (TANU) was very successful in institutionalizing new cultural values in the rural communities of mainland Tanzania although there still existed isolated cases in which familial and other communal ties provided the basis for organized activity among the peasants.³⁰ The AKP Turkey, when it established its local offices and different branches in the different provinces to communicate, respond, articulate and aggregate the voters' demand. With regard to the national economic and political problems in Turkey, the role played by the AKP assisted to a large extent in the political and transformation of Turkey. Turkey achieved a lot of economic and political successes of the AKP concerned policies, these successes are a function of three developments, the rise of the trading state, making Turkey visible through commerce, investment and trade, in the diffusion of Turkey's democratization experience as a work in progress and the positive image of Turkey's new foreign policy, including the introduction at policies encouraging free movement of people between Turkey and the Middle East.³¹

²⁹ Van Zuydam, Sabine,(2014), Credibility as a source of Political Capital : Exploring Political Leaders' Performance From A Credibility Perspective, ECPR Joint Sessions 2014, workshop 15: Political Capital and the Dynamics of Leadership: Exploring the Leadership Capital Index. P 1.

³⁰ Jonyo, Fred, (2003), Assessing the Role of Political Parties in Democratization in Kenya: The Case of 2013 General Elections, [http://www.fes-kenya.org/media/publications., p3.](http://www.fes-kenya.org/media/publications/)

³¹ Kassem,Taha, (2013), The Rise of Political Islam, Can The Turkish Model Be Applied Successfully in Egypt?, International Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences (IJHSS),Vol. 2, Issue 5, p 11

Concerning reconciliation and bridging cleavages in societies, many examples clarify the role of political parties in ending intranational conflicts, in Sri Lanka the long ethnic war and history of international involvement in failed peace initiatives, it is not surprising that political parties, the main of which are Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) and the United National Party (UNP), are deeply polarized in relation to both ethnic identities and the role of international actors in Sri Lanka. Given the deep history of distrust and outright violence among Sri Lanka's political parties, these two parties with other parties (nearly 40 parties and groups) managed in 2015 to unite and form "The united national front for good governance" and to maintain this collaboration to win the presidential and parliamentary elections. Moreover, this coalition started to cooperate with Tamil parties – notably the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) to play a key role in any future peace building process. Other examples of the reconciling role of political parties in national conflicts are, Nepal and Myanmar, etc. Credibility is a consequence of well-established institutional structure, communication and outreach, responsiveness to demands of voters and the electorate and effective political performance. A major indicator of political parties' credibility is the continuity of these parties in authority or at least their existence in the legislative and executive agents of the state. The AKP in Turkey, the Democratic and Republican parties in the USA and Labor and Conservative parties in UK, etc., are prominent examples of parties enjoying credibility.

As mentioned earlier, credibility is the source of political capital; how to accumulate this capital is a very hard task. The EPP haven't acquired yet the required qualifications and skills to be able to discover the source of capital. The researcher wanted to conclude this study by a clear cut question to the respondents to determine the political status of the EPP; this question is stated as follows: Do you desire to become a member in one of the Egyptian parties? The researcher found that 43 % strongly disagree, 27.8 % disagree, 7.6% agree and 5.1 % strongly agree, while 16.5 % is neutral. So, about more 70% of the respondents don't want to join the EPP, while about 12% want. No doubt that this high percentage clarifies the reluctance of the respondents to become members in the EPP due to the failure of the EPP to assume their expected roles and perform their required functions. Respondents feel that the EPP are either leaders' or authority oriented and concerns about public demands are only means to ends not the ends themselves. Consequently, it is doubted that the EPP can play any role in the democratic transition process.

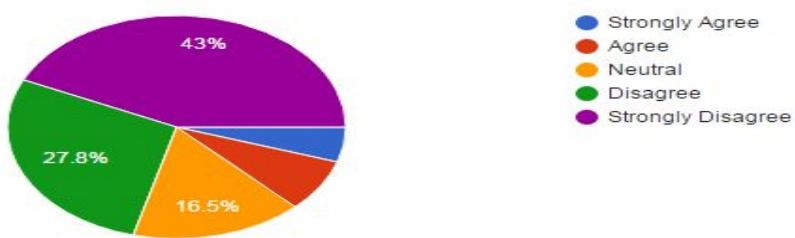


Figure 25

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Political parties are indispensable for democratic transition; they play a decisive role during the transition and consolidation phases of the democratic cycle. They have to motivate the system to work and start to deliver on some of the expectations that the public has invested in them. It is well known that the early phases of transition, citizen expectations of parties are exceptionally high. Yet, it is also at this point when political parties are least equipped to respond to these expectations. In the case of Egypt, one of the states witnessing transition, this wasn't the case. The EPP aren't yet equipped to respond to the citizens expectations. Absence of clear ideologies, unclear regulations for membership, poor institutional

structures, inability for developing new calibers and leaders, insufficiency of good communication skills, poor communication channels and local offices and structures, unorganized websites, inability to express views on local public issues, inaccessible information, unclear programs, irresponsiveness to public opinion and concerns, unconcern about local and national problems, demands of youth, women and minorities, missing the sufficient popular base, inability to politically socialize and mobilize citizens, weak articulation and aggregation and demands, lack of interest in national issues and problems and non-concern about reconciling between the conflicting parties in the Egyptian society are considered very strong drawbacks and deficiencies in the EPP. In other words, the EPP aren't well equipped to assume their roles and perform their functions well. Also, it means that the EPP are living in isolated islands from their society and from each other; each seeks its own interests on the expense of others and the community as a whole. What should be done?

To improve the partisan system in Egypt or to better equip the EPP in Egypt, successful examples must be considered and definitive steps must be taken. Of course, a lot of successful political parties exist in different countries, for example, AKP in Turkey, the Democratic Party (DS) in Serbia, the African Congress (ANC) in South Africa, etc. All of these parties provide a variety of learned lessons for all premature parties in countries which witness democratic transitions. Examples of these lessons are the AKP's lessons, for example, the ways to increase popular trust in the party, concern about economic problems, and investment in local apparatus, strategic use of media outlets, and the desire for change and identify the timeframe for it. Moreover, the Democratic Party in Serbia (DS) also provides very beneficial lessons, for example, effective and successful political parties are built on strong organizational foundations, consideration of all municipalities and improve the capacity to reach the entire populace and drawing on international experience thoughtfully and conduct one's own public opinion research. Another successful example is the African National congress (ANC) in South Africa where a variety of lessons could be considered, for example, the ANC conceived transition as a slow process and laying the ground work early is essential, it is a sign of political health to have well organized political parties and well organized dialogues are essentially required to reach compromises and hence, harmony in society.

In addition to consider and learning from successful examples, some required recommendations should be adopted and implemented by the EPP. It should be considered that a party's capacity for influence will depend on its electoral support and this depends on the possibilities that the party has to represent the preferences of the median voter. The path toward the median voter is based on different requirements that should be fulfilled by political parties. These can be summarized as follows:

- The EPP need a structure of trained people and an effective mechanism allowing it to respond to immediate problems.
- The EPP should properly use media outlets and E-Communication to reach as much as possible the entire populace.
- The EPP should be responsive to the public opinion and all segments in society
- The EPP have to balance the different interests.
- The EPP must develop and improve the candidate selection mechanisms.
- The EPP must prepare programme defining processes

- The EPP have to initiate, create, adopt and develop dynamics of coordination and communication between voters, professionals, members and supporters.
- The EPP should be understood as processes open to dialogue, negotiation and construction, not with fragmentation and polarization between sectors.
- The EPP should be concerned about socialization of citizens to increase political awareness.
- The EPP have to initiate, create, adopt and develop dynamics of articulation and aggregation on interests.³²

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³² Lopez, Jaume and Welp, Yanina, (2008), *Study on Political Parties With Successful Experience*. <http://www.idees.net/> Index, pp 1-2.

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